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every side of the Sun, without finding the object. As the Sun set, I again searched north, south, and east of it, and the next morning as it arose, north, south, and west of it, without success.

For several mornings and evenings Mr. PERRINE searched with the comet-seeker the region for many degrees about the Sun.

W. J. HUSSEY.

BRIGHT FIRE-BALL, JANUARY 26, 1897 (MT. HAMILTON).

At 0^h 11^m 44^s A.M., P.S.T., a brilliant fire-ball fell slowly from *Orion*, almost vertically — inclining a little towards the south. It burst into several pieces just before disappearing, but left no persistent train. It presented quite a sensible disc, and was several times as bright as *Venus* at her brightest — lighting up the sky noticeably.

C. D. P.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

“President KELLOGG submitted the following: A communication urging active measures to secure the adoption of the metric system. Professor GEORGE DAVIDSON asks the signatures of our Regents and Faculty in its favor. Regent HOUGHTON offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Board of Regents of the University of California fully indorse and recommend the passage of the bill now before Congress to adopt the metric system of weights and measurements, as provided in H. R. 7251 of 1st Session of 54th Congress.” [Adopted April 14, 1896.]—*Report of the Secretary of the University of California, 1895-6.*

ERRATUM IN NO. 53 OF THE *PUBLICATIONS*, A. S. P.

In the *Publications*, Volume VIII, page 328, line — 13, *for* AUWERS *read* AMBRONN, or ANDING. (A. A.)

HOËNÉ WRONSKI.

Most readers of mathematical astronomy have at some time in their lives met with a paper by VILLARCEAU: *Mécanique Céleste; Exposé des Methodes de WRONSKI*. Attracted by the name of VILLARCEAU, they may have spent more or less time over it; but finally all must have left it, uncertain whether the unknown WRONSKI was “a charlatan, a madman, or a genius.” At rare intervals the name of WRONSKI would recur to the

memory, accompanied by the uneasy feeling that the remaining doubt in his regard had not yet been settled. M. J. BERTRAND, Perpetual Secretary of the Paris Academy of Sciences, has lately taken a review of the whole of WRONSKI'S work,* and makes it very clear that he was neither genius nor charlatan, but simply insane. "His madness explains his charlatanism, excuses his imposture, and permits one to believe in the presence of genius imprisoned in insanity." After reading M. BERTRAND'S paper, few will doubt his conclusions. E. S. H.

PORTRAIT OF WILLIAM CRANCH BOND (DIRECTOR OF THE HARVARD COLLEGE OBSERVATORY, 1840-1859).

The portrait of Professor W. C. BOND given in this number is reproduced from a photograph of the oil painting now in the Harvard College Observatory. It forms one of the illustrations of a life of BOND,† which will shortly be printed; and is presented to the A. S. P. by the undersigned.

EDWARD S. HOLDEN.

Mt. HAMILTON, February 28, 1897.

METEOR OF JANUARY 24, 1897 (LOS ANGELES).

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 5, 1897.

Professor HOLDEN,

Lick Observatory, Mt. Hamilton, Cal.

Dear Sir:—On January 24th, at about 3:15 P.M., I observed a very large meteor, which passed over this place and, as near as I am able to judge, in a direction nearly due east. Unfortunately, I did not note the exact time of its appearance, and am not able to state the time positively, though from other circumstances, I am able to locate it as being about the time mentioned above. The meteor was visible sufficiently long for me to make a good observation of it. Its movement was, as before stated, nearly due east. Its apparent height was about thirty degrees above the horizon when first observed. At its disappearance it was approximately twenty-three degrees to twenty-five degrees above the horizon. Its color was a dazzling white, with a faint tinge of

* *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Vol. 139, p. 588.

† Memorials of WILLIAM CRANCH BOND, Director of the Harvard College Observatory, 1840-59, and of GEORGE PHILLIPS BOND, Director of the Harvard College Observatory, 1859-65, by EDWARD S. HOLDEN.